

Translating the science

Experiences at the University of Washington

November 2004





Making links (using SBRP research)

- Between students and SBRP scientists
- Between SBRP research and students
- Between environmental education and environmental health education

Online Chat Sessions

- Interactive, real-time chat sessions between:
 - 6th grade students at Harbour Pointe Middle School, Mukilteo, WA
 - SBRP scientists: Drs. Newman and Strand
- Connected hybrid poplar trees to a classroom unit on vascular plants.



Online Chat Sessions (cont'd)



- 60 students engaged in discussions relating to
 - waste management
 - Superfund issues
 - remediation of sites
 - how they became a researcher
 - what they do now



Fixing the Dirt with Plants exhibit

- Our theme at the annual Seattle International Children's Fair.
- Set up a scenario: where should the vegetable garden be placed?
 - Based on some data, one area had TCE and clean-up was necessary.
 - Described phytoremediation in general, focusing specifically on UW research.



Fixing the Dirt with Plants (cont'd)

- Students also learned that it is important to check if the soil is healthy for plants.
 - Students tested soil samples for
 - Nitrogen
 - Phosphorus
 - Potassium
 - soil pH



- 15 graduate students and staff supported the exhibit and reached over 500 visitors.



Attracting environmental educators

- Used phytoremediation as a way to engage traditional environmental educators in environmental health education.
- Reached 150 educators during the annual Environmental Educators Association of Washington meeting.



Challenges...

- Research is often very specific and a little difficult to explain.
- But it is worth it.
 - Activities are based on local research
 - Able to turn to the researchers for help
 - Can direct public questions to the scientist



UW SBRP Outreach Core



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